

## USDOL Assistant Secretary DeRocco and Governor Schweitzer Kick-off Montana's WIRED Initiative



MSU Northern College of Technology

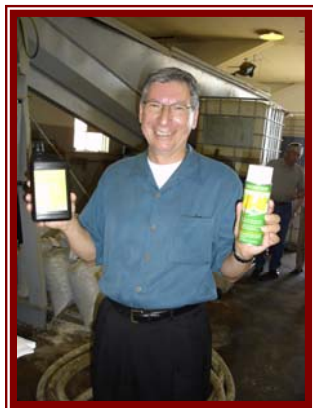
(Billings) --- Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training Emily Stover DeRocco joined Governor Brian Schweitzer, Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly, Economic Development Director Evan Barrett, Commerce Director Tony Preite, Ag Director Nancy Peterson and Commissioner's Office of Higher Education Dr. Arlene Parisot in the Central and Eastern Montana region's kickoff of the WIRED initiative.

"Central and Eastern Montana will build on its ag-economy history to advance biofuels and renewable resources in order to further develop the region's rich energy potential," said De Rocco.

"WIRED is an expression of President Bush's belief that developing and applying the American people's skills in productive and innovative ways are critical to keeping our nation competitive in the global economy."



DeRocco sampling biodiesel



Joe Juarez displays Peaks and Prairies product line

The region will create innovative biolubricant and bioproduct manufacturing clusters, which are globally competitive enterprises that will result in high paying jobs in rural communities. In addition, a Montana forecasting model indicates that for every job created in an oilseed crushing plant, two additional jobs will be created in the WIRED region.

The WIRED region, encompassing 32 counties and six Indian Reservations, will forge partnerships among state agencies, businesses, investors, academic institutions, entrepreneurs, philanthropists and tribal leaders to develop new directions for the future of rural Montana and its ag-economy.



DeRocco makes biodiesel at MSU Billings



Safflower Seed Sustainable Systems

Gov. Brian Schweitzer introduced the more than 70 attendees to his new girlfriend Camelina. Schweitzer, who has made alternative-fuels development in Montana a watchword of his administration, said the goal is to develop practical, on-the-ground solutions for alternative fuels.

Camelina, an oilseed, once used by the Romans to make lamp oil, will get a boost this year with about 20,000 acres planted in the state. Camelina is a source of omega 3-enriched oil. The oils are highly desired in food and feed markets and in the manufacture of biodiesel.



Sustainable Systems product line.

“With advances in biofuels and renewables, the region is well positioned to revitalize the economy with energy development,” said Schweitzer.



From seed to shelf